

2008 Report of the SYRA to the NYSWYSA Board of Directors

REGIONAL COMPETITIONS

The ODP Tournament, held at Rider College in Lawrenceville, New Jersey on June 6-8, 2008 saw 9 of NYSW's most promising young referees officiate games that are renown for the speed and talent of the individual players. Representing NYSWYSA were Christa Barnes (Syracuse), Tyson Buerkle (Ithaca), Michael Ertel (Buffalo), William Edgecomb (Ithaca), Ellen Krasniak (Binghamton), Christopher Mazgaj (Buffalo), David Monroe (Buffalo), Raymond Tam (Rochester) and Christopher Trotter (Rochester). Also representing our state were assessors Angelo Paparo and Dick Rief. With temperatures over 100° for the weekend, all of our referees were tested to the limits of their physical abilities and did an excellent job.

At the Region 1 tournament, held from June 25 -30, 2008 near Portland, Maine, 11 young New York West referees were able to shine. They were Philip Cunningham (Buffalo), Ashley Ernst (Buffalo), Andrew Evangelos (Rochester), Ellen Krasniak (Binghamton), Stephanie McKay (Buffalo), David Mon (Rochester), David Monroe (Buffalo), Brian Morgan (Rochester), Kathryn Nesbitt (Rochester), Christopher Richey (Ithaca) and Raymond Tam (Rochester). Again, all of our referees performed extremely well and all were rewarded with semi-final matches. Of the eleven, five were assigned to the finals. Assignments on the last two days were: Phil Cunningham, AR2 U13B Semi; Ashley Ernst, 4th official U19G Semi & Center on the U19G Final; Andrew Evangelos, AR2 U18B Semi; Ellen Krasniak, 4th Official U15B Semi & Center on the U12G 8v8 Final; Stephanie McKay, AR2 U15G Semi and AR2 on the U15G Final; David Mon, AR2 U18B Semi; David Monroe, AR2 U17G Semi; Brian Morgan, AR1 U12B Semi; Kathryn Nesbitt, AR1 U12G Semi and 4th Official U15G Final; Christopher Richey, AR2 U13G Semi; and Raymond Tam, 4th Official U12G Semi and AR2 on the U13B Final. Invitations to participate in the Directors Cup were awarded to Ashley Ernst and Stephanie McKay. The assessors representing our state at the Region 1 Championships were Dick Reif and John Kramer.

TRAINING, CERTIFICATION AND RECERTIFICATION

The State Referee Committee sponsored more than 80 educational events around the state in 2008. This training enabled the recertification of 1169 returning referees (66.3% of all referees registered in 2007) and the initial certification of 708 new referees bringing our total to an all time record of 1877 registered referees, a 6.5% increase in numbers over 2007.

A successful Regional/Professional clinic was held again in Rochester, this past May. An Intermediate Referee Clinic and an Instructor/Assessor Recertification Clinic were held this past spring which both drew large attendance.

There is an Associate Instructors Class (entry level instructor) scheduled for this November, and plans are to have an Instructional Theory Into Practice (intermediate level instructor) course in the spring of 2009.

MENTORING AND ASSESSMENT

This year the State Referee Committee made funds available to assess our "up and coming" referees on higher level state cup playdown and regional league matches. The SRC paid to have assessments competed for 24 matches at that level. We also matched the funding from NYSWYSA for assessment at the State Cup Final Four in Cortland this year allowing us to bring in 16 assessors to cover every field for virtually the entire tournament. This program also allowed us the opportunity to pair our most experienced assessors with our newest assessors, allowing the newer assessors to learn what to look for in our young, developing referees. In addition to these programs, approximately 250 other maintenance and upgrade assessments were completed to ensure the quality of the referees who are being supplied to our higher level matches.

The Buffalo district, with funding provided by the Western New York Junior Soccer League, also continued their highly successful program in 2008. This year, 529 soccer matches were mentored by 52 mentors who were helping 112 new referees become much more proficient in the art of refereeing soccer.

The Broome County Soccer Association moved forward with its mentoring program in cooperation with the Binghamton, Elmira and Ithaca referee districts as well this year, expanding the program from just new officials doing Under 10 matches to officials doing mid-level matches as well, allowing referees who have a few years of experience to also benefit from the program. This program extended the number of mentored matches from last year's total of 139 Under 10 matches to this year's total of 156 Under 10 matches and 39 other matches for a total of 195 matches with mentors out of a grand total of 780 matches. This means that 25% of all the matches in the league had assigned mentors watching the performance of the referees.

New mentoring programs are springing up in other parts of the state as well. Both the Syracuse and Rochester districts started new programs this year working with the Central New York Junior Soccer Association and the Rochester District Youth Soccer League with mentors being assigned to work the three man system with newer referees on certain selected younger age group matches. It is our hope that these leagues and districts will continue to work together to expand the size and scope of these programs as they have been proven to be essential to the retention of new referees as well as the development of better, younger referees. The districts that have provided the most opportunities for mentoring new referees have historically retained a far higher percentage of their referee population from year to year.

RECREATIONAL YOUTH SOCCER REFEREE PROGRAM

The recreational youth referee (Grade 9 referee) program in Western New York is getting healthier but is still short of the goal set for us by USSF of approximately 400 recreational referees. Total referee retention (all grade 9 referees who either returned or upgraded) was at 55%. The table below shows the statistics of registration comparing 2008 to 2007. We are very pleased at the number of Grade 9 referees who are choosing to upgrade to Grade 8 and continue their referee careers at a higher level but still unhappy with our retention rate at this grade level.

| STATUS | 2007 | 2008 | Change | Percentage |
|-----------------------------------|-------------|-------------|---------------|-------------------|
| New Grade 9 | 127 | 196 | 69 | 154% |
| Returning Grade 9 | 54 | 49 | -5 | 91% |
| Total Grade 9 Referees Registered | 181 | 245 | 64 | 135% |
| Grade 9's Upgrading to Grade 8 | 23 | 50 | 27 | 217% |
| Total Grade 9's Returning | 77 | 99 | 22 | 129% |

It is hoped that with increased awareness of the requirements of membership in USSF by New York State West's member clubs, and the additional publicity that the State Referee Committee and NYSWYSA sponsors, that we will get to our goals soon.

Respectfully submitted,
 William A. Campbell
 State Youth Referee Administrator
 WNYSRA and NYSWYSA